



More than 10,000 migrants await processing under bridge in Texas

BY CELINE CASTRONUOVO - 09/17/21 07:41 AM EDT

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Roughly 10,000 mostly Haitian migrants were crowded under a border bridge in South Texas awaiting processing Thursday, prompting U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) to announce it was sending additional agents to address the massive influx.

CBP said in a statement to multiple new outlets that "Border Patrol is increasing its manpower in the Del Rio Sector and coordinating efforts" within the Department of Homeland Security "and other relevant federal, state and local partners to immediately address the current level of migrant encounters and to facilitate a safe, humane and orderly process."

"To prevent injuries from heat-related illness, the shaded area underneath Del Rio International Bridge is serving as a temporary staging site while migrants wait to be taken into USBP custody," the agency added.

CBP went on to say that it had provided drinking water, towels and portable toilets for migrants to use as they wait for processing.

Jon Anfinsen, the top Border Patrol union official in the Del Rio Sector, [told The Washington Post](#), "We're scrambling to bring every resource we can, but it's a logistical nightmare."

"We're pulling agents from across the country to help, but they're not going to be there today, and we're just trying to keep heads above water," he added.

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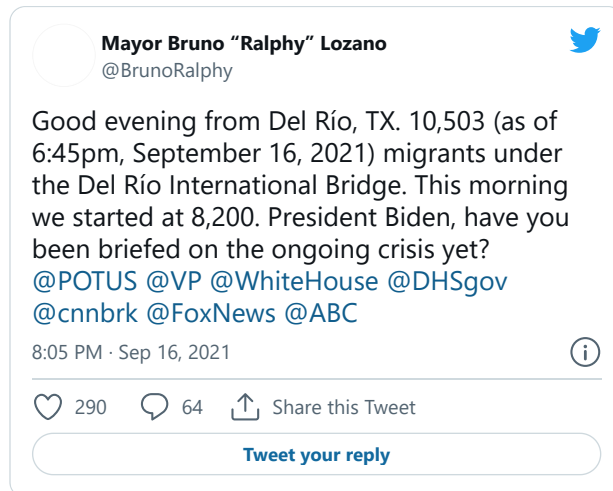
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The crowded area comes as [recent CBP figures](#) noted that more than 29,000 Haitians have arrived along the border in the past 11 months, including mixed-nationality families who have had children born in South American countries like Brazil or Chile.

Del Rio Mayor Bruno Lozano (D) tweeted Thursday evening that he had requested assistance from federal officials, noting that there had been 10,503 migrants counted under the bridge.

"This morning we started at 8,200," he wrote. "President Biden, have you been briefed on the ongoing crisis yet?"



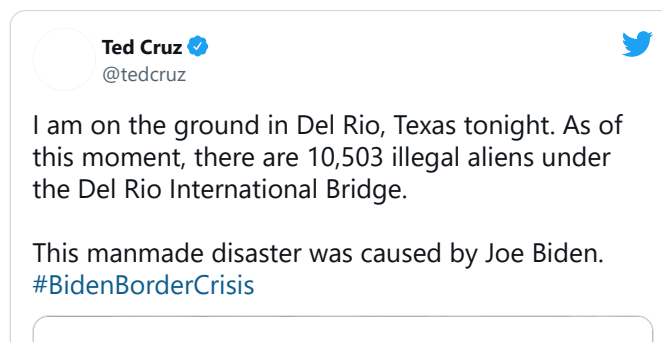
Republicans seized on the influx to condemn the Biden administration for its handling of the surge in migrants at the southern border over the past year, with Texas Sen. Ted Cruz (R) tweeting a video of himself from the Del Rio bridge, writing, "This manmade disaster was caused by Joe Biden."



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The administration has said that it will continue to expel migrants under the coronavirus-era Title 42 of the public health code, though human rights advocates have criticized officials [for resuming repatriation flights](#) to Haiti amid the country's ongoing political, economic and environmental disasters.

The Hill has reached out to CBP for further comment.

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